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Dr. PAYSON ON WAR AND PEACE.—War is surrounded by a deceitful lustre. The monster, unveiled in all his deformity, is seen steeped from head to foot in human gore, gorging his insatiable maw with the yet quivering limbs of mangled victims, and feasting his ears with the wailings of disconsolate widows and helpless orphans; while the flash of cannon, the glare of bombs, and the red blaze of cities wrapt in conflagration, furnish the only light which illuminates his horrid banquet. Such is the idol whom the votaries of war adore; such the Moloch on whose altars men have exultingly sacrificed, not hecatombs of beasts, but millions of their fellow creatures; on whose blood-thirsty worshippers beauty has lavished her smiles, and genius its eulogies; whose horrid triumphs, fit only to be celebrated in the infernal world, painters, and sculptors, poets and historians, have combined to surround with a blaze of immortal glory.

But let the monster's hideous form be exposed in its true colors; and it will be an honor to Christianity, a powerful argument in her favor, to be known as his most decided and successful foe. To accomplish this work, to place before men in naked deformity the idol they have so long ignorantly worshipped in disguise, and thus turn against him the powerful current of public opinion, is the great object of the associated friends of peace. Nor is it easy to conceive how *any one* who believes the Scriptures, and professes to be a disciple of the Prince of Peace, or a friend to the human race, *can justify himself in withholding his aid from a cause so evidently the cause of God.* Who would not wish to share this honor? After the glorious victory shall have been won, after wars shall have been made to cease under the whole heaven, who will not then wish to have been among the few that first unfurled the consecrated banner of peace?

A WAR-SPIRIT IN CHRISTIAN MINISTERS.—At the late meeting of the Presbyterian General Assembly, (N. S.), a "special order was reported recommending prayer throughout the church for the preservation of peace," such as was unanimously adopted about the same time by the Old School Assembly; but "Dr. Sunderland *enlivened* the Assembly with a *fierce war speech*," demanding "a reservation to meet the case of Great Britain," and with so much success, that, "though the assembly were evidently against him, the feeling he excited was such that the whole-subject was indefinitely postponed."

This may well seem strange; but a little fact will perhaps explain it all. Dr. Sunderland had long been engaged in writing a History of our Navy, in several volumes, (already published in part), doubtless a patriotic glorification of its exploits; and reeking with the spirit of such a work, it was quite as natural as it was unchristian for him to "let off" a war-speech against a resolution recommending prayer in favor of peace.

We have ourselves had some experience in this line, quite an episode in our experience. In June, 1866, when Europe was very seriously threatened with a general war, we offered, in a meeting of evangelical ministers, a resolution urging Christians to pray that God would avert a calamity so vast and terrible. Presuming that such a proposal would need no advocacy before "the General Association of Congregational Ministers of Massachusetts," we left it without any argument of our own for them to adopt, as we supposed they would of course; but

what was our surprise to learn the next day from *sneers in daily papers*, that those representatives of Orthodoxy, men whose churches had been trained for half a century to unite in special prayer every month for the spread of the gospel, with its promises of permanent peace through the world, refused to endorse a request for prayer that God would hold back millions of reputed Christians in the heart of Christendom from a wholesale butchery of one another! No wonder we have never found any one to justify an act so inconsistent and scandalous. But how came such a body of Christian ministers thus to contradict and stultify themselves? They had chosen as their moderator an *ex-war* chaplain of the army, fresh from its bloody experiences, and zealous for its honor; and though we had not even alluded to rebellion, or the general cause of Peace, not at all, he must needs leave the Moderator's chair, a very unusual thing, to make a tirade on the Peace Society! The association could not well have been left in a mood to take *any* action in favor of Peace, and so they just laid the subject on the table, probably with little thought of the grave responsibility they thus incurred in *refusing to recommend prayer for peace* at the very moment when a fearful war-cloud hung in terror over half Europe.

EXCESSIVE ARMAMENTS.

The policy of the (French) Empire which for many years has given a strong impulse to European society, has been simply one of living upon capital. It was a prime necessity that it should appear to be splendid at any cost; but the success will be better estimated when a few years have slipped by. The gigantic credit companies established under Imperial patronage, promising such marvellous development to France, and indeed to Europe generally, were organised really on this principle; brilliant success for the moment, no matter what it might cost to the future.

The recent disastrous collapse of these companies, which wise men foretold from the first, is one of the main causes of that utter stagnation of capital and industry which fills France with discontent, and the Emperor's Government with no little alarm. Business and enterprise of all sorts had been stimulated to an unnatural activity by purely fictitious processes; an appearance of sound prosperity was manufactured, and palmed upon the world. Neighboring countries caught the infection. Credit companies of all sorts sprang up like mushrooms, and money to any extent was forthcoming, under their auspices, for any sort of idle scheme. The whole world, three years ago, was living on its capital to a desperate extent. Straining every instrument of production, glutting every market with goods, floating bubble schemes, with the most shameless mendacity, and reaping the golden harvest of the years of plenty with mad indifference to the years of famine which must succeed.

The money thus easily won has been spent grossly, the luxury of Paris during these last years resembling the gross and extravagant luxury of Imperial Rome. Three thousand millions of francs, (£120,000,000,) is the price which the French people have paid for the moral debasement and commercial embarrassment in which the Imperial system has landed them. That is about the amount of the loans which have been contracted since 1854. This burden of taxation, the Empire will hand over to the future, with a moral wastefulness and wantonness, far more dis-

astrous in their influence on society than any merely material loss.

A very able and high-minded French Prince, the Prince de Joinville, has published his deliberate opinion, that in the enormous demand which the Government proposes to make on the population, that it may have a million and a quarter trained soldiers at its disposal, France is living upon its capital of men. The prince declares that no population can bear such a drain unimpaired. The yearly demand must exhaust the nation, diminish its rate of increase, and impair fatally its industrial power. This is the most formidable item of the account. Money may be replaced, industry may be revived, moral habits may recover their tone; but a population, whose vital strength is exhausted, has nothing to look to in the future but decay. Statesmen seem to be at last awakening to the truth that the present military system, the armed peace which every nation in Europe contributes to maintain, is exhausting the very vital stamina of society. The warning voice of the French prince has been earnestly re-echoed by Lord Stanley when he said that the present system must come to an end, since no nation can bear the burden of conscription and taxation much longer. Europe is just consuming its own vitals; and unless some speedy way of return be found to moderate armaments and economic government, honest trading and purer life, Europe will be found lying as paralysed and helpless before the flood of Slavonic conquest with which the alarmists threaten us, as Rome once lay before the scourge of Attila and his Huns.—*J. B. Brown.*

STANDING ARMIES.—A SIGNIFICANT CONTRAST.

IN 1820, says Edmond Potonie, "Europe supported 1,200,000 men; in 1865, it reached 3,800,000; now it is *more than six millions*. While Europe is burdened by her armies, the young and vigorous America, which reckoned 1,050,000 men in the Federal Army on the first of May, 1865, had disbanded 700,000 by the last of the same year, and to-day (1869), there are but 25,000 men under the flag. Is it better to lose the training, or to lose the people?"

Mark in this the tendency of large armaments in Europe to a steady, indefinite increase. Here is an increase of 500 per cent., in less than fifty years. Where is this enormous evil to stop? If not arrested, must it not end in universal, irredeemable bankruptcy?

Our own policy is a striking contrast. We have at most only the germ, or nucleus of a regular army, but nothing that would in Europe be called a Standing Army. Ours is only a handful of men trained to arms, as a species of national police to aid the government in enforcing its laws. It does not profess to be a preparation for actual war; and whenever that comes, the men and the materials must be extemporized to meet the emergency.

Thus ours is a system, not so much of war as of peace; and this policy, if adopted by Europe, would effect there a disarmament far beyond what even the friends of peace, most of them, have hitherto demanded; for we do not understand them as objecting to the use, if necessary, of an *armed police* for the support of government in the execution of its laws. Even the London Peace Society, thought to be sufficiently radical, has always recognized the right and duty of rulers to enforce law against its violators, and thus guard the peace and welfare of society at large.

Thus *our* war-system, if such it may be called, is quite unlike that of Europe. The latter is kept up at as great an expense as the people can be made to bear, not to preserve peace and order at home, but to fight other nations, while ours is used chiefly as a handmaid of our government in supporting its authority among ourselves, and ensuring a due enforcement of our laws. Its duties are for the country at large very like the local police in Boston or New York. Its main purpose is not War but Peace—peace at home; and if the habits of our people, and the policy of our government were to prevail all over Europe, they would go far to supersede her present war-system, and certainly would insure a more entire disarmament there than has yet been proposed.

Is not our duty then plain and imperative as leaders to the world in peace, as well as in freedom and popular government? Such, we think, is now our special mission. The habits of our people, and the policy of our government peculiarly qualify us to do this; and we certainly can, if we will, do it more easily and more effectually than any other nation. We now stand confessedly at the head of other governmental reforms; and if we will champion this greatest of them all, we shall cap the climax of our achievements for the benefit of our race.

DEMOCRACY FAVORABLE TO PEACE.—"There has been some progress since Waterloo. That enormous butcher's bill has not been forgotten. It can hardly be doubted that fifty years ago such a controversy as that in which the United States and ourselves are now engaged, would have led to hostilities. That it has not done so now, that nations generally are more reluctant to fight than they were formerly, is, we believe, due chiefly to two causes,—the *increase of commerce*. * * * The second cause is the *increase of Democracy*. It was said many years ago that war is a game which, if their subjects were wise, kings would not be suffered to play at. But the subjects at that time had no power to prevent it. They were without political privileges; they could do nothing. All is changed. The people are now virtually self-governed; it is they who decide if there shall be peace or war; and as it is they who have to bear all the burden of the latter alternative, their voices are generally for the former. Of old, the kings played the madman, and the people were punished. The people now keep their kings under restraint if necessary. It comes to pass that just in proportion as a country becomes democratic does it become peaceful. The Working Men's International Congress at Geneva was so democratic that Napoleon was alarmed by it. Europe, at all events, had no reason to be alarmed, for while Napoleon was forcing his Conscription Bill through the French Legislature, the Congress were raising the cry of "*War against War*."—*English Paper.*

PROGRESS OF POPULAR GOVERNMENT.—We see it stated that "Russia, Turkey and the Grand Duchy of Mecklenburg are now the only countries in Europe which do not possess a national representative assembly;" in other words, where democracy, popular rule or influence, does not prevail in the government. A vast stride this of improvement in the special interest of the people; all the result not of war, but of peaceful, moral influences, and a sure proof and pledge that a pacific policy is steadily gaining favor, and will in time, if not soon, supersede that of war. The people, as far as enlightened, see that the war-system is their worst foe; and whenever they come to bear sway in fact, whether in form or not, they will either abolish this system entirely, or shear it of its power to do its present mischief to themselves.